

**Abstract 644**

**TITLE:** Integrating HIV and AIDS Surveillance in Canada, A First Step

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**ISSUE:** Since 1982, when monitoring of AIDS cases began in Canada, AIDS surveillance had been the mainstay of monitoring the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Improving treatment regimens and prophylaxis have delayed the progression of HIV to AIDS significantly, resulting in a decline in reported AIDS cases. To more effectively monitor trends in the HIV/AIDS epidemic, emphasis has shifted to HIV surveillance.

**SETTING:** A National HIV Database was established in 1995 to monitor and report upon trends in HIV tests into which 111 provinces and territories voluntarily contribute non-nominal confidential data.

Implementing an HIV test surveillance program has been complicated by HIV not being reportable in all provinces and territories has complicated implementing an HIV test surveillance program. In 1998, an integrated approach to HIV and AIDS surveillance was initiated by the Laboratory Center for Disease Control. A first report of the progress towards integrating HIV and AIDS surveillance at the national level in Canada will be presented.

**PROJECT:** Non-nominal AIDS case reports are provided to the Laboratory Center for Disease Control by all provinces and territories in Canada and are housed within the Laboratory Center for Disease Control's AIDS Case Report Surveillance System. Developing a methodology to integrate surveillance of HIV case reports has posed considerable challenges.

**RESULTS:** Integrating HIV and AIDS surveillance will result in a more comprehensive surveillance system which monitors HIV infection from time of first positive test, to AIDS diagnosis, to time of death.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** Developing an integrated HIV and AIDS surveillance system has been a challenging task at the national level. Coordinating consistent and epidemiological valuable data acquisition activities has been impacted by difficulties involved with gaining acceptance of the importance of integrating HIV and AIDS surveillance, provincial and territorial legislation regarding privacy and technological differences between the provinces, territories and the Laboratory Center for Disease Control.

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